



Milwaukee County

Supervisor Eyon Biddle, Sr., 10th District
Supervisor Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., 1st District

For Immediate Release February 2, 2012
Contact: Harold Mester, Public Information Manager
414/278-4051 or harold.mester@milwcnty.com

BIDDLE-LIPSCOMB READY-TO-WORK INITIATIVE MOVES FORWARD

Milwaukee, WI – The [Biddle-Lipscomb Ready to Work Initiative](#) authored by Supervisors Eyon Biddle, Sr. and Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., took a major step forward with today's unanimous County Board decision to sell County-owned land in the former Park East corridor to the Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE). Once the deal is closed, approximately \$1 million of the land sale revenue will fund the Ready to Work Jobs Initiative.

The initiative works to create greater job access for Milwaukee County residents who have demonstrated prior success such as attaining a high school diploma or GED and maintaining a valid driver's license, yet are still unable to secure family supporting jobs. To achieve this, Ready to Work will join forces with local nonprofits BIG STEP and Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP) to provide the educational training and on the job work experience necessary for advancement to higher level job positions.

"The fact that we are on track to complete this transaction ahead of schedule means we can train and place Milwaukee County residents on career paths to economic security," said Supervisor Biddle.

"The revenue generated from this land sale will allow us to identify current job opportunities and connect individuals who are ready to work with needed training," Supervisor Lipscomb said. "This \$1 million investment will place up to 1,000 Milwaukee County residents on the path to sustainable careers."

The crucial job training provided by Ready to Work will shrink the gap between available jobs and skilled workers, and help fill both County and private sector jobs. The Center for Economic Development at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee recently issued a report revealing that more than half of African American males in Milwaukee are unemployed.

"Given the dismal economic numbers for black male employment, it's important that we get the Biddle-Lipscomb Ready to Work Initiative off the ground ASAP," Supervisor Biddle said. "This is a strong first step in a long journey to solve the urban unemployment crisis in Milwaukee."

"This land sale creates a dynamic win-win situation," Supervisor Lipscomb added. "MSOE acquires the space to develop and grow their organization and Milwaukee County generates the funding to create needed job opportunities. I am excited that Ready to Work is moving forward ahead of schedule."

###